

Not Your Average Automotive Shop: MWSS-274 Maintenance Platoon Keeps Mission-essential Vehicles Running

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CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – It takes many different types of vehicles to accomplish the Marine Corps mission here. From bulldozers that build berms to humvees that bring troops to combat, keeping them all going in this austere environment is quite a chore.

Marines with Marine Wing Support Squadron 274's Maintenance Platoon, from Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, go to war with the dirt and sand every day.

"The reason we are so important to the mission is we do all the maintenance for vehicles pertaining to the flight line and convoys," said Sgt. Tyler Moore, the floor chief for Maintenance Platoon.

Moore and his crew are currently repairing a P19 fire truck that was damaged in transit from Iraq. They must hammer out the damage to the radiator cover and replace the turret before the vehicle can return to work.

The P19 fire truck is a burly green machine used by Crash Fire Rescue to respond to fires on base and aircraft emergencies on the flight line. It's paramount that the Marines fix the machine quickly and get it back in service.

The operational tempo is vastly different here, compared to MCAS Cherry Point. The heightened pace, constant workload and dusty conditions are ever-present challenges. The Marines' most common task is replacing dust-clogged air filters. If this task is neglected, the vehicles will become sluggish and eventually break down.

Business is always booming and the Marines are always trying to get trucks out, explained Cpl. Jeremy Arbogast, a motor transportation mechanic with the platoon. Despite the challenges, the platoon's stamina is unrelenting.

"We don't let anything slow us down," said Arbogast.

It's important these Marines don't slow down as they keep the gears turning for their fellow Marines on and off base.

With MWSS-274's Maintenance Platoon on duty, the Corps will maintain their advantage in the battle against heat and dust